

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 08419 01 OF 03 061208Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 PA-01
SS-15 SP-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 /070 W
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O P 061140Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8304
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN
CINC LANT NORFOLK
USLO SACLANT
USDEL MC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
UFHBG/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG 6016
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 08419

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, MILI, NATO, GW
SUBJECT: NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM (LTDP)

REF: (A) STATE 113469 DTG 040125Z MAY 78
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SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 08419 01 OF 03 061208Z

(B) USNATO 04448 DTG 031300Z MAY 78

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MAY 5, EMBOFF MADE A STRONG
APPEAL ON THE LTDP TO GENERAL ALTENBURG OF THE DEFENSE
MINISTRY AND TO DR. HOFSTETTER AND HIS DEPUTY MR. VON
PLOETZ OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE. DRAWING HEAVILY ON

REF (A), EMBOFF EMPHASIZED THE FUNDAMENTAL POINT THAT THE LTDP WOULD NOT REQUIRE GOVERNMENTS TO WRITE BLANK CHECKS. ALTENBURG APPRECIATED THIS POINT, BUT HE IMPLIED THAT MINISTER APEL WAS NOT CONVINCED BY THE "NO BLANK CHECKS" RATIONALE. AN LTDP COMMITMENT POTENTIALLY INVOLVED MONEY, EVEN IF NOT IN A SPECIFIC BUDGETARY SENSE. ALTENBURG DETAILED THREE AREAS IN WHICH THE FRG COULD NOT MAKE COMMITMENTS AT THIS TIME (PARA 5, BELOW). HOWEVER, HE SAW REAL HOPE FOR FRG AGREEMENT TO A "LOGISTICS COMMAND" UNDER AFCENT. HE SAID THERE WAS VERY LITTLE CHANCE THE FRG WOULD BE ABLE TO PAY A SHARE OF THE DIRECT COSTS OF STATIONING THE NETHERLANDS BRIGADE IN GERMANY BECAUSE OF THE DANGEROUS PRECEDENT WHICH THIS WOULD ESTABLISH. JUST RECENTLY THE BELGIANS HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE FRG PAY A SHARE OF THEIR STATIONING COSTS IN THE FRG IF IT PAID PART OF THE STATIONING COSTS OF THE NETHERLANDS BRIGADE. MOREOVER, DEFENSE MINISTRY FINANCE EXPERTS FEARED THE US MIGHT ONE DAY USE THE PRECEDENT OF THE DUTCH BRIGADE TO ASK FOR SIMILAR PAYMENTS. ALTENBURG SAID THE CANADIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL ON THE LTDP WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE, AND THAT HE WAS SURE THE FRG WOULD OPPOSE IT. FINALLY, HE EMPHASIZED THE STRONG DETERMINATION OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE LTDP A SUCCESS. END SUMMARY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BONN 08419 01 OF 03 061208Z

2. ON MAY 5, EMBOFF CARRIED OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS IN REF (A) DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH GENERAL ALTENBURG, HEAD OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY'S OFFICE OF POLITICAL/ MILITARY AFFAIRS, AND WITH DR. HOFSTETTER, DEPUTY HEAD OF NATO AFFAIRS, FOREIGN OFFICE. THE LATTER'S DEPUTY, MR. VON PLOETZ, WAS ALSO PRESENT. CDR ANNENBRING, HEAD OF NATO AFFAIRS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE, WAS ON LEAVE).

3. WITH ALTENBURG, HOFSTETTER, AND VON PLOETZ, EMBOFF MADE A STRONG APPEAL FOR MORE AMPLE AND SPECIFIC GERMAN COMMITMENTS TO THE LTDP AND FOR A LIFTING OF GERMAN RESERVATIONS ON UNRESOLVED ISSUES. EMBOFF EMPHASIZED THE FUNDAMENTAL POINT THAT THE LTDP AGREEMENT AT THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT WILL NOT REQUIRE NATIONS TO SIGN BLANK CHECKS.

4. GENERAL ALTENBURG SAID HE PERSONALLY REALIZED AND APPRECIATED THIS LATTER POINT, BUT HE INDICATED THAT THERE WERE THOSE IN THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT WHO WERE NOT COMPLETELY CONVINCED BY THE QUOTE NO BLANK CHECKS UNQUOTE RATIONALE, AND HE IMPLIED THAT MINISTER APEL WAS ONE OF THEM. ALTENBURG SAID THAT

NO GOVERNMENT WOULD LITERALLY AGREE TO SIGN A BLANK CHECK IN ANY EVENT, BUT THE FACT REMAINED THAT SUMMIT ENDORSEMENT OF MEASURES INVOLVED A POTENTIAL MONEY COMMITMENT. THERE WERE SOME THINGS THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT WAS WILLING TO COMMIT ITSELF TO UNDER THE LTDP AND SOME THAT IT WAS NOT--AT LEAST NOT YET.

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PAGE 01 BONN 08419 02 OF 03 061218Z
ACTION EUR-12

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ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 PA-01
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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 08419

5. ALTENBURG SAID HE FELT IT WOULD BE USEFUL, FOR
DISCUSSION PURPOSES, TO ISOLATE THOSE ASPECTS OF THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 08419 02 OF 03 061218Z

LTDP TO WHICH THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT COULD NOT MAKE A
COMMITMENT AT THIS TIME. LACK OF A COMMITMENT NOW DID
NOT MEAN THAT THE FRG REJECTED THESE ITEMS, ONLY
THAT IT HAD NOT SAID QUOTE YES UNQUOTE TO THEM. THE
ITEMS FOLLOW:

(A) TASK FORCE 6 RECOMMENDATIONS (C 3): ALTENBURG
SAID THE FRG COULD AGREE ONLY THAT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS
BE EXAMINED BY EXPERTS. THESE SHOULD INCLUDE NOT
JUST EXPERTS IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONS, BUT
ARMAMENTS EXPERTS AS WELL--E.G., IN THE GERMAN
GOVERNMENT, PEOPLE FROM MR. EBERHARD'S ARMAMENTS
DIVISION OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. (ALTENBURG
EMPHASIZED THAT THE STRONG FRG OPPOSITION TO JTIDS
CONTINUES).

(B) CREATION OF THE NATO POST OF ASSISTANT
SECRETARY GENERAL FOR LOGISTICS. ALTENBURG SAID THE
FRG CONSIDERED LOGISTICS A NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY,
AND THAT IT WAS CONCERNED THAT CREATING THE POST MIGHT
MAKE NATO, AS AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, LOOM
TOO LARGE IN THE LOGISTICS AREA.

(C) AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO AN AFCENT COMMAND-
CONTROLLED STOCK OF SELECTED AMMUNITION ITEMS,
REPRESENTING AN ADDITIONAL 7 DAYS' SUPPLY. ALTENBURG
SAID THE FRG HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL
BECAUSE ITS COST TO THE FRG WAS NOT CLEAR AND BECAUSE
THERE WERE MANY IN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY WHO FELT
THAT CONSCIENTIOUS MAINTENANCE OF A 30 DAYS' SUPPLY
OF AMMUNITION ITEMS WAS ADEQUATE AND THAT THE RESOURCES
REQUIRED FOR AN ADDITIONAL 7 DAYS' SUPPLY COULD BE MORE
LOGICALLY ALLOCATED ELSEWHERE, E.G. IN ARMOR.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BONN 08419 02 OF 03 061218Z

6. ALTENBURG SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS STILL NO
FIRM FRG AGREEMENT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MODEST
QUOTE LOGISTICS COMMAND UNQUOTE UNDER AFCENT, MOST
DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIALS NOW SUPPORTED THE IDEA.
SINCE ALTENBURG FELT THIS PROPOSAL WOULD ALMOST

CERTAINLY BE ACCEPTED BY HIS GOVERNMENT, HE DID NOT INCLUDE IT WITH THE MAJOR PROBLEM AREAS, ABOVE.

7. ALTENBURG SAID THE FORWARD STATIONING OF THE NETHERLANDS BRIGADE IN THE FRG WAS A PROBLEM OF YET ANOTHER KIND. HE SAID THAT OF COURSE THE FRG STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE FORWARD STATIONING OF THIS BRIGADE, AND THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD GO OUT OF ITS WAY TO MAKE REAL ESTATE AND OTHER FACILITIES AVAILABLE. HOWEVER, THERE WAS VERY LITTLE CHANCE OF DIRECT FRG PAYMENT OF A PORTION OF THE COST OF THE STATIONING--AS PROPOSED BY SACEUR--BECAUSE OF THE DANGEROUS PRECEDENT WHICH IT WOULD ESTABLISH. JUST A WEEK OR SO AGO, THE BELGIANS HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE FRG PAY A SHARE OF THEIR STATIONING COSTS IN THE FRG IF IT PAID PART OF THE STATIONING COSTS OF THE NETHERLANDS BRIGADE. MOREOVER, DEFENSE MINISTRY FINANCE EXPERTS FEARED THAT THE US MIGHT ONE DAY USE THE PRECEDENT OF THE NETHERLANDS BRIGADE TO ASK FOR SIMILAR PAYMENTS.

8. ALTENBURG EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRECEDENT OF A DIRECT FRG SUBSIDY FOR THE STATIONING OF THE DUTCH BRIGADE COULD BE POLITICAL DYNAMITE. HOWEVER, HE SAID THE FRG WAS THINKING POSITIVELY ON THE MATTER AND THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO FIND SOME INDIRECT WAY OF SUBSIDIZING THE DUTCH PRESENCE BEYOND THE OBVIOUS ONE OF SUPPLYING FREE REAL ESTATE AND FACILITIES.

9. ON ANOTHER MATTER, ALTENBURG WAS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM EMBOFF THAT THE MAJOR NATO COMMANDERS (MNCS) WHO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 BONN 08419 02 OF 03 061218Z

WOULD COORDINATE IMPLEMENTATION OF LTDP MEASURES WOULD NO LONGER BE REFERRED TO AS QUOTE MANAGERS UNQUOTE BUT RATHER AS QUOTE COORDINATORS UNQUOTE (SEE PARA 4B, REFTEL A). HE EMPHASIZED THAT A MANAGERIAL ROLE OVER NATIONAL PROGRAMS WOULD OF COURSE BE UNACCEPTABLE.

10. ALTENBURG THANKED EMBOFF FOR HIS PRESENTATION, AND SAID THAT THE INFORMATION IT CONTAINED WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL IN FRG CONSIDERATION OF THE LTDP IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. ALTENBURG TOOK NOTES THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION, WHICH LASTED 45 MINUTES. HE STRONGLY EMPHASIZED TO EMBOFF THE FRG'S DETERMINATION

SECRET

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SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 08419 03 OF 03 061221Z
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ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 PA-01
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S E C R E T SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 08419

TO MAKE THE LTDP A SUCCESS.

11. EMBOFF'S PRESENTATION IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 08419 03 OF 03 061221Z

DR. HOFSTETTER AND MR. VON PLOETZ FOLLOWED THE SAME
LINES AS THE PRESENTATION TO ALTENBURG. HOFSTETTER
LISTENED CAREFULLY AND VON PLOETZ TOOK NOTES. THEY

SAID THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PRESENTATION WOULD BE BROUGHT PROMPTLY TO THE ATTENTION OF SENIOR LEVELS OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

12. HOFSTETTER SAID THE QUOTE NO BLANK CHECKS UNQUOTE RATIONALE APPEARED TO MEAN THAT THE FRG WOULD NOT BE ASKED TO DO WHAT IT COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT DO IN ANY CASE. EMBOFF EMPHASIZED THAT THE MAIN POINT WAS THAT THE LTDP ASKS ONLY FOR GENERALIZED AGREEMENT TO PURSUE SPECIFIC MAJOR MEASURES IN CONCERT, AND THAT THERE WAS NO CONSTITUTIONAL IMPEDIMENT IN ANY NATO GOVERNMENT TO SUCH GENERALIZED AGREEMENT. IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS OF BUDGETARY FUNDS. HOFSTETTER AND VON PLOETZ SEEMED TO ACCEPT THESE POINTS.

13. EMBOFF TOOK ADVANTAGE OF HIS TALKS WITH ALTENBURG, HOFSTETTER AND VON PLOETZ TO EMPHASIZE TO THEM THE US GOVERNMENT'S STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE CANADIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL ON THE LTDP (SEE REF B). HOFSTETTER AND VON PLOETZ MADE NO COMMENT, BUT GENERAL ALTENBURG SAID THE DEFENSE MINISTRY CONSIDERED THE CANADIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL MOST UNFORTUNATE AND THAT HE WAS SURE HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD OPPOSE IT.
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